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1-24-1788

### John Kean to Susan Kean, January 24, 1788

John Kean

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Jan<sup>y</sup> 24. 88.

The heaven hand of affliction falls heavy upon our houses - The newspapers have announced the melancholy tidings of our dear Elizas death, cruel news & not one line to comfort or relieve my agonised soul - I tremble for my love & fear it is too much for her to bear - indeed it is a trying case - you have reason to weep & be sorrowful nor can I in the cool language of mild philosophy tell you to cease or view it as one of those cases which being inevitable is not to be remedied - but I sympathise with you in your sorrow & mingle my tears with yours for this beloved sister, snatched from us in so unexpected a manner, but in those moments when sorrow will permit reason to resume her seat let us console ourselves with a contemplation of her virtues - she was noble, faithful, honorable, obedient, kind, friendly, she was, the Moon of York, chaste as the icicle, That's curdled by the frost from purest snow, And hangs on Dian's Temple.

How happy a thing is it to die, when one has no reason for remorse or self reproach. & she was surely



dear from either for truly might she say in her last moments - Eternal being! the soul that I am now going to give thee back, is as pure at this moment, as it was when it proceeded from thee - render it partaker of thy felicity.

Alas! there is nothing in this sublunary <sup>world</sup> on which we can fix our affections - all is subject to change - the great globe itself will dissolve & leave not a wreck behind - 'tis beyond this world we must look for comfort -

Omnipotent parent of the world! dispel from my Susan ~~cesses~~, Overweening sorrow which destroys the pure essence of the soul & unfits it for all its duties - make her remember what she owes to heaven & me - that she may not sorrow like those who have no hope - guard her omnipotent power from every harm and thou angelic spirit! of our dear departed Eliza, watch over & bless my Susan - alas! perhaps I am like thy Otto left comfortless - shocking thought it rends my very soul -

If souls have a knowledge of each other



in their blissful mansions, how much must those of your parents & relatives have been rejoiced on the approach of our dear sister to see her released from care and strife & vexation to be made a partaker with them of eternal bliss -

How often have I wished that you had come with me, then might this dire affliction have been kept from you - but the will of God - must be done - Oh! my soul, will know no peace until I hear that my beloved is well & safe in March if there was a vessel ready to sail so that I could get to you the first week in February I should certainly come - but there is none -

My love you must lay aside self harming heaviness & entertain as cheerful a disposition as you can that you may be a comfort to your Father & poor Otto - how small is your



cause of grief when compared with theirs - would  
to heaven I could pour comfort into their souls -

Poor Otto! it is time alone & his own good sense  
that must bring the balm of consolation to his  
wounded spirit - truly may he say

There's not a wretch that lives on common charity,  
But happier than me. For I have known  
The luscious sweets of plenty: every night  
Have slept with soft content about my head,  
And never wak'd but to a joyful morning.  
Yet now must fall like a full ear of corn,  
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's withered in the ripening.

There cannot be a more trying affliction than  
his, it requires all the power of Religion and  
morality to make it bearable - but inscrutable  
are the ways of providence - resignation is all  
that is left for the virtuous man -